



School Nutrition Programs

This weekly newsletter from the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) is dedicated to providing education, training, and technical assistance opportunities to school nutrition professionals, helping to ensure seamless operations for those participating in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Child Nutrition Programs. If you are the food service contact for your school or facility, please be certain that everyone on your team has access to this important information.

Tip of the Week

Miss A Newsletter?
Bookmark IDOE's [newsletter archive page](#) to access past School Nutrition Programs emails and refer to past newsletter guidance.

Important Updates

Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Awards
Hoosier Awardee Spotlight: Noblesville Schools
Innovation in Nutrition Education: Noblesville Schools developed a new "Take a Taste" program, giving students the opportunity to sample diverse healthy food dishes throughout the school year. Students have had the opportunity to sample items including: cinnamon roasted butternut squash, local apple varieties, rainbow carrots, pumpkin and oat energy bites, spaghetti squash, and corn and black bean "rainbow confetti cups." Each tasting is accompanied by cafeteria engagement activities, educational activity sheets that often include a STEM connection, and a simple recipe to try at home. The goal of this initiative is to expose students to a wide array of nutritious foods, educate on farm to table practices, and demonstrate the benefits of a balanced diet.



Farm to School

LFSCC Termination Update
On Friday, March 3, the Indiana Department of Health learned the Cooperative Agreements for the upcoming Food for Schools and Child Care (LFSCC) were terminated by USDA-AMS for all states and territories. The current LFS agreement in place can continue uninterrupted until all funds are used. Updates will be provided if and when they are received. Please contact [Sophie Lindley](#) with any questions.

Did You Know Dairy is Local?
Did you know that fresh dairy milk is the one of the most local products that you serve to your students? With an average of 48 hours from farm to cafeteria, the milk that you serve daily is not only local, but fresh. Join the American Dairy Association Indiana in amplifying this message with the ['Milk is Local' kit](#). Use the pieces to share the milk is local message to your students while also encouraging them to choose this nutrient dense option for each meal. Turn your cafeteria into a classroom!


Indiana State Department of Agriculture – Indiana Grown
Indiana Grown is excited to host the second annual Indiana Grown Showcase on Tuesday, April 29, at the Biltwell Event Center in Indianapolis. This curated event is designed to connect local Indiana businesses with distributors, food service professionals, K-12 food service directors, buyers, and chefs. During the event, participants can network with local business owners wanting to expand and grow their wholesale and retail partnerships with over 80 Indiana Grown vendors and their products present. This event is free to attend. Register [here](#). Contact IndianaGrown@isda.in.gov with any questions.

USDA Foods

IDOE is reviewing USDA Foods Inventory
IDOE is reviewing each school's USDA Foods inventory at the state assigned warehouses (Dilgard Frozen Foods and Stanz Foodservice) as well as at the USDA Foods for processing facilities and unused DoD funds. Unused USDA Foods are subject to being swept and redistributed to other schools.

USDA Foods and DoD Fresh Orders and Deliveries
Schools should begin preparing for the end of the school year. Allocations end on Wednesday, April 30. USDA Foods deliveries (based on delivery periods) and USDA Foods for Processing and DoD orders end Monday, June 30. Schools should make plans for ordering and utilization. USDA Foods for Processing pounds remaining will carry over to school year 2026 depending on usage and availability. DoD Fresh funds will not carry over.

USDA Foods Recipes
Use your USDA Foods [blueberries](#) and/or [diced chicken](#) to prepare this variation of [blueberry chicken salad](#) or [5-minute healthy blueberry frozen yogurt](#) for a quick treat. These recipes must be adjusted to meet serving sizes and meal patterns.



Training and Webinar Opportunities

Calculating Non-Program Food Cost Webinar
Join IDOE to discuss the process of completing the Non-Program Foods Revenue Tool. Completion of the tool ensures compliance with and accurate tracking of non-program food costs. This webinar will cover cost calculations, pricing considerations, and USDA requirements to help manage non-program food expenses effectively. Thursday, April 10, at 10 a.m. ET. Register [here](#).

Culinary A+ for School Meals In-Person Training
School nutrition operations are transforming. School nutrition standards require schools to offer more fruits, vegetables and whole grains and students demand tastier, fresher and more contemporary menu items. While this brings some challenges it also brings many opportunities to add new, exciting items to your menu. This class will focus on basic culinary skills needed to prepare and serve more fruits, vegetables, whole grains and salads while enhancing flavors and meeting the demands of today's guests. These basic culinary skills will help schools offer foods and meals that support the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and school nutrition standards.

Training is Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. local time.

- Columbus on Monday, June 2, through Friday, June 6
- Charlestown on Monday, June 9, through Friday, June 13
- Michigan City on Monday, July 7, through Friday, July 11
- Indianapolis on Monday, July 14, through Friday, July 18
- Fishers on Monday, July 21, through Friday, July 25
- Crown Point on Monday, July 28, through Friday, August 1

Register [here](#).

Reminders

School Breakfast Week Scrapbook
The mystery has been solved! Clue in to School Breakfast was a hit! Thank you to everyone who submitted photos for the National School Breakfast Week Indiana scrapbook. Check out the submissions [here](#).

Updates from Our Partners


Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) March STAR Webinar
The ICN STAR webinar this month is titled Strategies for Incorporating Plant-based, Minimally Processed Standardized Recipes for All Students. This session, presented in collaboration with Friends of the Earth, will highlight practical strategies for school nutrition professionals to incorporate plant-based, minimally processed standardized recipes that showcase a variety of flavors while aligning with the USDA meal pattern requirements. Thursday, March 27, at 3 p.m. ET. Register [here](#).

American Dairy Association Fuel Up Equipment Grant
The Fuel Up Equipment Grant application is open through Tuesday, April 8. Schools can apply for equipment that is designed to support innovative school meal solutions proven to increase student participation in school meals. This grant is designed to help increase student participation in, and access to, nutritious school meals. To qualify, schools must participate in the National School Lunch Program. Find more information on the [Fuel Up Grants webpage](#).

Upcoming Dates



Thursday, March 27 at 3 p.m. ET	ICN March STAR Webinar: Strategies for Incorporating Plant-based, Minimally Processed Standardized Recipes for All Students
Monday, March 31	December claims for reimbursement are due
Tuesday, April 8	Fuel Up Equipment Grant Deadline
Thursday, April 10 at 10 a.m. ET	Calculating Non-Program Food Costs Webinar



Additional Resources

[School Nutrition Programs Calendar](#)
[IDOE's Nutrition Webpage](#)
[CNPweb](#)